

BULLETIN
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The Maritime Library Association

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MARITIME LIBRARY ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

The Maritime Library Association will hold a conference in Halifax November 7-8. The program has not reached the final stage, but we have worked out a tentative plan.

On the morning of the 7th we shall have a business meeting. We hope that Miss Elizabeth Morton, Secretary of the Canadian Library Council, may be meeting with us to explain plans for a Canadian Library Association. In the afternoon, we shall visit the library at Mount Saint Vincent.

Dr. E.A. Corbett, the Director of Adult Education for Canada, will address a public meeting in the evening.

Thursday morning we are hoping to have a talk on the use of radio in library work, and a discussion on the promotion by libraries of listening groups like Citizens' Forum.

Sometime during the conference we shall have a showing of the National Film Board's "Library on Wheels". This new film, showing the work of the British Columbia travelling libraries, will be a special treat.

Members wishing accommodation should write to Miss Evelyn Campbell, Secretary-Treasurer, Maritime Library Association, 282 Tower Rd., Halifax. Halifax is still a crowded city, and it would be wise to write to her as soon as possible.

November is by no means the ideal time of year to hold a conference, but there is no choice. We could have had good October weather and a poorer program, or a stimulating program with one of the most skilful speakers in Canada, Dr. E.A. Corbett, whose subject of adult education is of special interest to librarians. The executive of the M.L.A. apologizes for the number of times the conference has been postponed. We hope that every librarian and every friend of libraries in the Maritime Provinces will come to Halifax for the meetings on November 7-8.

Marion Gilroy
President, M.L.A.

REGIONAL LIBRARIES IN NEWFOUNDLAND

In June 1942 the Public Libraries Board for Newfoundland announced that twenty-five Regional libraries were to be set up in Newfoundland under the Regional Library scheme. These libraries were to be set up at the rate of five a year in rural communities having a population of 1,000 or over; provided such rural communities were suitably located to serve a region. The Carnegie Corporation of New York granted the sum of \$10,000 for the purchase of books for these twenty-five Regional libraries.

Each of these twenty-five Regional libraries is to be administered by a local library committee, appointed by the local population, according to an agreed constitution drawn up by the Public Libraries Board. Each Regional library will be in charge of a paid part-time librarian who will be given a period of training at St. John's; all expenses paid. Seven librarians have already attended the first librarian's conference held at St. John's in September 1944, and have taken and passed successfully the short librarian's course given at that conference. It is intended to hold a conference annually.

Regional libraries are not fully maintained by the Public Libraries Board, but are only helped by it. Assistance is given each of the twenty-five Regional Centers as follows:

1. A basic stock of new books the first year to the value of \$800.00. These books are selected by the local committees in collaboration with the Public Libraries Board.
2. Annual additions of books to the value of \$100.00. It is expected that this amount will be supplemented this coming year by another \$100.00.
3. A yearly grant of approximately \$200.00 to HELP pay for the services of a part-time librarian, and to help meet some of the operating costs.
4. Funds to enable the Regional librarians to come to St. John's for training, expenses paid.
5. The services of a trained librarian, whose duty it is to help the local communities in the organization of their center and to make periodic visits to the centers to give advice and direction.

To be eligible for the above assistance each Regional center must fulfil the following conditions:

1. Set up a library committee. These local library committees are appointed by the people in the centers.
2. Adopt a constitution based on the model drawn up by the Public Libraries Board.
3. Provide premises for use as a library and a reading room.
4. Raise a yearly sum of money, which together with the grant from the Public Libraries Board, will be sufficient to meet operating expenses.

The task the Public Libraries Board has in hand is indeed great. They have set out to give something like adequate library service to approximately 300,000 persons scattered in 1,300 villages along a coastline of 6,000 miles or greater than twice the distance across Canada from Newfoundland to Vancouver. Added to that is the fact that the rural communities of Newfoundland possess few roads linking up the settlements.

June 1945 will see the end of the third year of our five year scheme. Fifteen Regional Centers are in operation scattered over various parts of the island. The bulk of these regional centers are in communities between 1,000 - 2,000 persons.

The people are taking full advantage of the libraries in their communities as is evidenced by the fact that although the libraries are only open about twelve hours a week, yet many of the Regional centers have a circulation of 1,000 - 1,500 books monthly. Given sufficient book stock circulation figures would surely soar. Many of the centers have not stopped with the circulation of books in their own communities, but have attempted to give service to other neighbouring communities in their region. Seven centers have one or more branches already in operation. As yet the scheme does not provide for grants of money to these branches.

The opening of one of these Regional libraries is made a big thing in the community. One of the libraries was officially opened by a Bishop, others have been opened by Medical Doctors, Magistrates, and other leaders in the community. As our scheme is only one of self-help, communities are expected to raise funds to supplement the annual grant from the Public Libraries Board. Here too, Regional centers have not been slack. One center raised \$700.00 the first year and bought \$150.00 worth of books and the encyclopedia "Americana". Another has set out to raise \$500.00 to purchase premises they thought ideal for use as a library.

In a survey of reading tastes made by the Supervisor of the scheme, early in 1945, it was found that although there was a good demand for the lighter type of fiction there was also a heavy demand for the more serious books. Of the Non-Fiction books the heaviest demand is for books on History and Current Events. Of these "Dress rehearsal" by Quentin Reynolds ranked highest in popularity. Following closely behind were "We landed at dawn" by Austin; "The raft" by Trumbull; "They were expendable" by White. In the Biography section "Northern nurse" by Merrick leads in popularity. Then follows "Story of my life" by Keller; "Winston Churchill" by Kraus; "Horse and buggy doctor" by Hertzler; "One pair of hands" by Dickens; "Madame Curie" by Curie. There is also a heavy demand for books on carpentry, diesel engines, domestic arts, agriculture.

Up to the present time we have mainly been devoting our time to the opening up of the centers. In our new development which is to follow our present five year plan we shall have to consider the opening up of branches and deposit stations and further the payment

of grants to branches as well as to centers. There may be other possibilities. As the majority of our people live on the coasts it may be possible to serve parts of our 6,000 mile coastline by means of a Book-boat. For the present time a book-truck seems out of the question because of the lack of good roads and the severity of our winters.

Hedley O. King, Supervising Librarian, Regional Libraries

LIBRARY AFFAIRS IN THE CONFERENCE CITY

Memorial Library for Halifax

The Halifax Citizens' Forum Council has sponsored a series of meetings through the summer. Among the speakers were Ira F. Macnab, Chairman of the Halifax Civic Planning Commission, and D.P. Reay, architect and town planner, who was then with the Nova Scotia Department of Municipal Affairs. A number of films on town planning and housing were shown at these meetings.

After considerable study of conditions in Halifax, the group decided that the primary need of the city was for a modern, efficient public library. The main concern then was: How can we get it? It was agreed that the most effective war memorial the city could have would be a library.

On September 26th, the Citizens' Forum Council called a meeting to determine the reactions of the Service clubs in the city to the establishment of a memorial library. These representatives, as well as those from other groups including the Home & School Associations and labour organizations, were unanimous in their support of the idea. The discussion was a practical one of dollars and cents and how to go about conducting the campaign. Another meeting will be held on October 10th, and the representatives will report the reactions of their members. It is hoped that the library will be planned as the headquarters of a regional library for Halifax.

The next day a contribution of \$566 towards the proposed Halifax Memorial Library was earmarked by the Halifax Salvage Committee in the first donation by any civic body to the Public Library. The money will not be paid unless steps are taken within twelve months to establish an organization for the construction of a memorial library. It looks now as if Halifax would have a library before too long.

University Libraries in Halifax during the War

The tremendous influx of service personnel to the Halifax area added to and broadened the existing scope of activity in the university libraries. Throughout the war years the Macdonald Memorial Library has been freely used by men and women of the Forces.

Many of these were carrying on university courses by correspondence; some were graduates or people interested in following special lines of reading; others came through the evening classes which were organized by the university in 1944 chiefly for the benefit of Service personnel.

Until the Navy established a library at H.M.C.S. Kings late in 1943, its personnel made extensive use of the college libraries. When the Navy took over the buildings at Kings the College had to give up its attractive reading room, although it was fortunate enough to retain its stack-room. The loss of this reading room meant that all students had to be accommodated at Dalhousie, and as a result, often not a vacant seat could be found in the reading room there.

The resources of the library were made available to the Canadian Legion Library from its inception and were continually drawn upon.

Calls from the Services made for a greatly increased telephone reference service. Questions ranged from the compatibility of the cock-roach and the bed-bug to the present whereabouts of the Titanic.

Perhaps the library service productive of the most tangible results was that given by the Medical and Dental Library which was opened in the summer of 1939.

The opening of this building with its spacious reading room came at an opportune time enabling students to escape from the discomforts of crowded rooming-houses. For years the place was in use seven days a week and was closed only at Christmas and New Years. Evening hours were very greatly extended.

From the beginning the freedom of the library was given to the people of the Services, no deposit or introduction being required. The use they made of it gave evidence of the progressive spirit in medicine and dentistry among officers in the Forces. Many of these were able to read and study under circumstances more favorable than they had ever enjoyed. Frequently doctors, both British and foreign, wondered up from ships in port and spent hours among the new journals and books. One case in which the library could give assistance is of special interest to the general public. In the grim days when the submarine menace was at its height, and survivors were taxing the facilities of the Halifax hospitals, the reference service of the library was constantly used as skilful surgeons encountered and solved the problems of immersion foot.

Since Halifax will continue to be both a hospital and naval centre, the work with doctors on ship and in hospital promises to persist. The war has beaten a path to our door.

The Provincial Science Library

The Provincial Science Library, containing books on pure and applied science, and the trades, is an amalgamation, under Governmental maintenance, of the Library of the Nova Scotian Institute of Science, which was established in 1863, the Provincial Science Library, established in 1900, and the Sir Hugh Fletcher Memorial instituted under the auspices of the Mining Society of Nova Scotia in 1926.

At the completion of the building of the Nova Scotia Technical College in 1908, the floor above the Provincial Museum was allotted to the Provincial Science Library. Both the Library and the Museum are under the same Provincial Departmental administration. The Journals, Proceedings, Transactions and Bulletins of Scientific Societies in all parts of the world, which form the collection of the Nova Scotian Institute of Science, were added to the small collection of scientific and technical books of the Provincial Science Library, and this was the nucleus of the present library.

The library receives a small yearly grant for the binding of periodicals and the purchase of new books. The Science Library is a free, public library and serves the rural areas as well as the city. Owing to its specialized collection, it does not have a very large circulation. Rural borrowing has dropped off during the war years, but the library has cooperated closely with the Canadian Legion War Services Library in providing books on special technical and scientific subjects for the three services in the Atlantic Area.

NOTES AND PERSONALS

Miss Nora Bateson has gone to take charge of the Home Reading Department of the Detroit Public Library. For her pioneering contribution to library developments in the Maritime Provinces we are deeply indebted. We wanted her to stay in Nova Scotia; and although she has gone our very best wishes go with her.

Miss Mary Newsom, formerly librarian of the Crapaud branch of the Prince Edward Island Libraries, was recently appointed to the staff of the Legislative and Public Library, Charlottetown, on the resignation of Miss Margaret Jenkins. Miss Jenkins' marriage to Mr. Fred Taylor of Charlottetown took place on September 19.

Miss Mary Falconer, who went to Mt. Allison University as Librarian in the fall of 1944, has now become Dean of Women at the University.
